

VZCZCXRO7971
PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHLZ
RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #0822 1841006
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 021006Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1089
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3969
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1786
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1653
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2222
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2652

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000822

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
PLEASE PASS TO USTDA DAN STEIN
TREASURY FOR BAKER/LANIER
USAID/W FOR EA/AA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ECPS](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S TELEPHONY SYSTEM APPEARS TO IMPROVE

REF: ASHGABAT 0479

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) For the first time since August 2006, Post has been able to complete successfully a monthly emergency telephone system test. This change indicates a basic improvement in Turkmenistan's international dialing capabilities and telephonic infrastructure. It is possible that one international gateway which was reportedly shut down in 2006 due to nonpayment of international telephone bills has been reopened. It is also possible that Turkmenistan added some additional telephone lines. In May 2008, the Ministry of Communications met with Post's IMO -- a meeting that Post had requested two and one-half years ago -- and 10 days after the meeting, approved registration of many Post satellite systems and radio signals that had been pending since 2000. Also as a result of this meeting, a number of long-outstanding phone-line repair requests have been resolved, and the IMO has been told that we no longer need to write a diplomatic note for telephone-line repairs.

13. (SBU) COMMENT: Deputy Chairman in charge of Transportation and Communications Gurbannazar Ashirov was fired on April 14 (reftel). While some felt that blaming Ashirov for problems in the communications sector was unfair, the decision to get rid of Ashirov seems to have helped unblock the communications sector bureaucracy and improve the overall service mentality. END COMMENT.

HOAGLAND